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# Imām Sufyān Ibn ‘Uyaynah

By: Salaahud-deen ‘Ali Abdul-Mawjood

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## Author's Note

Indeed, all praise is due to Allāh. We praise Him, we seek His Aid, and we seek forgiveness of Him. And we seek refuge in Allāh from the evil of our selves and from the evil of our deeds. Whomsoever Allāh guides, there is none that can misguide him, and whomsoever Allāh misguides, there is none that can guide him.

And I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except for Allāh - alone and without partners. And I bear witness that Muḥammad is His Slave and His Messenger.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾

"O you who believe, fear Allāh as He should be feared and do not die except while you are Muslims [in submission to Allāh]." [Āl 'Imrān (3):102]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا﴾

"O mankind, fear your Lord who created you from a single soul. And from it He created its mate and dispersed from them both many men and women. And fear Allāh through whom [i.e. in His Name] you ask one another [i.e. request favors and demand rights] and the wombs [i.e. fear Allāh in regards to the relations of kinship]. Indeed, Allāh is Ever-Watchful over you." [An-Nisā' (4):1]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا ۖ يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ ۗ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا﴾

*"O you who believe, fear Allāh and speak the truth, He will amend for you your deeds and forgive you your sins. And whoever obeys Allāh and His Messenger has certainly attained a great success."*  
[Al-Aḥzāb (33):70-71]

As to what follows:

Indeed, the most truthful of speech is the Book of Allāh, and the best of guidance is the guidance of Muḥammad, and the worst of affairs are the newly created matters. And every newly created matter is an innovation. And every innovation is misguidance.

This is a series of biographies of some of the scholars and *Muḥaddithīn* of this *Ummah* which Allāh has granted glory and honor until the Hour. We will focus on certain aspects of the lives of these scholars such as their attributes, their manners, their knowledge, their worship, and their religion, and how great is our need in this age to know about these matters! There can be no return to the glory and honor that this *Ummah* possessed except by assuming the noble attributes that the first generations possessed.

The biographies of these scholars have been unknown to many of the Muslims for quite some time, and so the torch to guide those in confusion was extinguished. It has been waiting for the one who will set it alight again to illuminate the path. People

have grown tired of hearing empty talk; everyone wants to see this religion become a practical reality just as it was in the lives of these scholars and in the lives of the Muslims who followed them. The religion was well-established in their time and it filled their hearts and minds, and it was part of their very flesh and blood. One senses that their every breath, every movement was for Allāh's sake. If they spoke, it was for Allāh's sake that they spoke, and when they remained silent, that too was for Allāh's sake.

They illuminated the world with their piety, their knowledge, their worship, and their righteous deeds. If you look towards their character and their morals, you would say, "Such was the character and morals of the Prophets." If you were to look at their dealings with people, you would see a living translation of Allāh's Book, and a practical application of the Sunnah of Allāh's Messenger ﷺ. The very mention of these scholars' names soften the hearts, and it rejuvenates decrepit limbs in order to rush towards Allāh. Whenever one of the characteristics of the righteous would be mentioned in the presence of Makhḥad ibn al-Husayn,<sup>[1]</sup> he would say,

لَا تَغْرِضَنَّ بِذِكْرِنَا فِي ذِكْرِهِمْ = لَيْسَ الصَّحِيجُ إِذَا مَشَى كَالْمُقْعَدِ

*Do not think of mentioning us along with them, for the healthy person who walks is not like the infirm one who must sit.*<sup>[2]</sup>

It is from Allāh's Blessing and Grace that *Dar-us-Salam*

<sup>[1]</sup> See *at-Taqrīb* (no. 6530).

<sup>[2]</sup> Abū Nu'aym, *al-Hilyah* (8/266).



in Riyadh has resolved to publicize the biographies of these scholars and circulate them for all of the Muslims throughout the world. This way, the Muslims may have full knowledge concerning them, and the Muslim youth may take them as role models, in order to make the Ummah's present with its past.

The noble brothers responsible for this publishing house requested that I write some books to familiarize the Muslims with their scholars, so I performed *istikhārah* to Allāh, and I resolved to take up this project - and from Allāh is all help sought.

It had been my intention that the series be a comprehensive reference concerning the biography of these scholars and their narrations of *ḥadīths*, with mention of all the references, however the brothers responsible for the publishing house desired that each book be basic in order to benefit the common Muslims, especially the youth, so I have attempted to be concise - and from Allāh is all help sought.

I would like to note that I did not rigorously apply the principles of *al-Jarḥ wat-Ta'dīl* in the study of these biographies,<sup>[1]</sup> whatever I found to be well-known concerning these scholars in the major books of the *Sunnah* and biographies without any scholar objecting to their veracity, I mentioned it. Whatever seemed objectionable or unusual, I avoided it, following the path of those who have preceeded me in that such as al-Ḥāfiẓ adh-Dhahabī, al-Ḥāfiẓ ibn Kathīr, al-Ḥāfiẓ ibn Hajar, and others who concerned themselves with biographies. I did provide extensive references for my

[1] The science of critiquing narrators.

work so as not to make the footnotes of the book unnecessarily lengthy; I sufficed with mentioning a single reference for every footnote - and with Allāh is all help sought. So we begin with the biography of one of those scholars so that the *Ummah* may see some of its history and look at its scholars and cry out to its sons, "Who will follow their path?!"

This is the biography of the notable Imām, Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah, may Allāh have mercy on him, who linked the generation of the *Tābi'īn* with that of the followers of *Atbā' al-Atbā'*.<sup>[1]</sup> He was the rare and unique scholar of his age, and he was a torch for the *Sunnah* and a proof upon the Ummah, may Allāh ﷻ have mercy upon him.

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[1] The first generation after the Companions are known as the *Tābi'īn*, meaning, the followers. The next generation is known as *Atbā' at-Tābi'īn*, "the Followers of the Followers." The one after that is called *Atbā' al-Atbā'*.

## Introduction

All forms of praise are due to Allāh, the Lord of the Worlds, for all of His boundless blessings upon us and upon all His creatures. And may Allāh send *Ṣalāh* upon His Prophet, Muḥammad, the Prophet of Mercy and the Seal of the Prophet, and upon his Family and Companions.

As to what follows:

Allāh, 'Azza wa Jall, sent Muḥammad ﷺ as a messenger to all mankind, and He revealed to him the Book as a clarification of all things. Allāh appointed him ﷺ as the one to explain it, as He ﷻ said:

﴿وَأَنزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الذِّكْرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ﴾

"And We have revealed to you the Reminder <sup>[1]</sup> so that you may clarify to mankind that which has been revealed to them." [An-Nahl (16):44]

And He, ﷻ said:

﴿وَمَا أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا لِتُبَيِّنَ لَهُمُ الَّذِي اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾

"And We have not revealed the Book to you, except so that you may clarify to them that wherein they differ." [An-Nahl (16):64]

So Allāh's Messenger ﷺ is the one who clarifies the order of Allāh ﷻ and the meanings of His Book with

<sup>[1]</sup> A reference to the Qur'ān.

which He addressed mankind. He is the one who makes clear what Allāh meant, and what Allāh has legislated in His religion of obligations and practices. He was in Makkah and Madīnah for a total of twenty-three years establishing the symbols of the religion for the people, instituting the obligations and the *Sunnahs*, implementing Allāh's Judgments, prohibiting the *Harām*, permitting the *Halāl*, and bringing the people to the Way of the Truth by word and deed. He continued on that way until Allāh ﷻ took his soul. The Prophet ﷺ established Allāh's proof upon His creatures through the Verses that he conveyed and explained - such as the explicit (*Muḥkam*) Verses of the Qur'an and the inexplicit (*Mutashābih*), the general Verses and the specific, the abrogating and the abrogated - and through his giving of glad tidings and warnings, as Allāh ﷻ states:

﴿رُسُلًا مُّبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ لِئَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَى اللَّهِ حُجَّةٌ بَعْدَ الرُّسُلِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا﴾

"(We sent) Messengers as bearers of glad tidings and warners, so that mankind would have no argument against Allāh after the Messengers." [An-Nisā' (4):165]

## The Path to Knowledge of the Qur'an and the Sunnah

So if anyone should ask, "What is the path to attaining knowledge of the meanings of Allāh's Book and the symbols of His Religion?" the response is, "By way of the authentic narrations from Allāh's Messenger ﷺ, and from his illustrious Companions who witnessed

the Revelation and understood the real meanings, may Allāh be pleased with all of them."

So if it should be said, "Then how can one know the authentic narrations from the weak ones?" the response comes, "By the careful critique of the adept scholars from every age who were blessed by Allāh with knowledge of this field."

There would be no way to know any of the meanings of Allāh's Book, nor of the *Sunnah* of Allāh's Messenger except by way of narrations. Therefore, it is obligatory to sort the trustworthy, precise narrators from the heedless, error-prone narrators, to say nothing of the liars who fabricate false *ḥadīths*. Since this religion has come to us by the transmission of narrators, it is binding upon us to know them. We must investigate them to know who meets the conditions of trustworthiness and reliability. Those conditions are that they must be trustworthy in and of themselves, knowledgeable concerning the religion and people of *Taqwā* and *Wara'*<sup>[1]</sup> possessing good memory and precision in narrating, without being subject to carelessness, nor prone to frequent errors in their narrations, nor falling into confusing the erroneous narrations with the correct ones.

It is obligatory to separate them from those narrators who the trustworthy scholars have criticized and exposed their falsehood, their many careless mistakes, their poor memory, and their frequent errors, so that the evidences for this religion can be clearly known. In

[1] *Wara'* is to exercise caution concerning one's religious affairs in order to avoid any doubtful or questionable matters.

this way only can it be known who are the ones that Allāh has entrusted in the earth with His Book and with the *Sunnah* of His Messenger ﷺ, and they are these trustworthy narrators. So we must hold fast to what they have narrated, and that is what should be relied upon and judged by. Our religious affairs must be directed in accordance with that.

Likewise, the people of falsehood and poor memory will be known, and their narrations can be understood in their proper light, whether they are the result of error or fabrications. These are the criticized narrators. Some of them, it is obligatory to reject their *ḥadīths* altogether without giving them any consideration nor acting on them, while in the case of others, their *ḥadīths* should be written down in order to be examined and perhaps to be used as supporting narrations.

Then it is necessary to sort these narrators into various groups according to their levels; the scholars specialized in the knowledge of the narrators and critiquing the narrators recognize the various narrators. So some they identify as trustworthy and precise. Others they recognize to be trustworthy, except that they may commit the occasional error, so their *ḥadīths* are also regarded as acceptable. And others still they recognize to be trustworthy, pious narrators except that they are prone to error and bad memory, so the *ḥadīths* of these narrators are written concerning noble manners, *at-Tarḥīb wat-Tarḥīb*<sup>[1]</sup>

[1] *Tarḥīb*, encouraging good. *Tarḥīb*, admonishing against performance of wicked deeds.



and *Zuhd*.<sup>[1]</sup> However, their *ḥadīths* cannot be relied on as proof in areas of *Ḥalāl* and *Ḥarām*. There were also some untrustworthy narrators who tried to mix with the trustworthy narrators so that their narrations would be accepted, but the great scholars exposed them. Their *ḥadīths* are completely abandoned, their narrations are given no consideration, and they are not to be put into use at all.

[1] Asceticism.

## The Companions ﷺ

As for the Companions of the Messenger ﷺ, they were witnesses to the revelation, and they were knowledgeable of the proper understanding of the Verses. They were chosen by Allāh Himself to be the Companions of His Prophet ﷺ conveyed to them from Allāh ﷻ. They heard his every command and prohibition and learned his every teaching. They memorized all that information with great precision and so they attained understanding of the religion. This is because they observed Allāh's Messenger ﷺ from up close and they learned from him his explanation of the Qur'ān. Allāh ﷻ honored them by making them examples for us, and He negated any doubts or accusations of falsehood against them. He Himself declared them the trustworthy people of this *ummah* when He said:

﴿وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ﴾

"And so it is that We have made you a *wasat* community so that you may be witnesses over the people." [Al-Baqarah (2):143]

The Prophet ﷺ explained that by *wasat*, Allāh meant '*adl*,<sup>[1]</sup> so they were the trustworthy men of this nation. They were the Imāms of Guidance and the transmitters of the Book and the *Sunnah* so Allāh encouraged us to emulate their guidance and follow

[1] Just, trustworthy. This prophetic *tafsīr* was related by Imām Aḥmad in *al-Musnad* (3/9) with an authentic *isnād*; see *Tafsīr ibn Kathīr* (vol. 1, p. 423).

their path as He has stated:

﴿وَمَنْ يُشَاقِقِ الرَّسُولَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا بُيِّنَ لَهُ الْهُدَىٰ وَيَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ سَبِيلِ  
الْمُؤْمِنِينَ تُوَلَّ مَا تَوَلَّىٰ وَنُصْلِهِ جَهَنَّمَ ۖ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا﴾

*"And whoever opposed the Messenger after the guidance has become clear to him and chooses other than the Path of the Believers, We shall set him in the path he has chosen, and drive him into Hell, and what an evil destination!" [An-Nisā' (4):115]*

The Prophet ﷺ exhorted the Companions in many *ḥadīths* to convey his teachings. In one such *ḥadīth*, he stated, "May Allāh brighten the face of a man who hears my words and memorizes them well until he conveys them to others." And the Prophet ﷺ stated in his *khutbah*, "So let those of you present convey to those who are absent." And he said, "Convey from me, even if it be but a single Verse."

Then the Companions, may Allāh be pleased with them, scattered throughout the various lands and took part in many conquests. Some of them took up positions as governors and judges, so each one spread in his particular land whatever he had learned from Allāh's Messenger ﷺ. They would pass judgment according to the Judgment of Allāh ﷻ and conduct affairs according to the *Sunnah* of Allāh's Messenger ﷺ. When they would be asked questions, they would give the response of Allāh's Messenger to that question or to similar issues. They devoted themselves with full sincerity to teaching the people the rulings of their religion, until Allāh ﷻ took them up, may Allāh's Pleasure, Forgiveness, and Mercy be

upon all of them.

### The *Tābi'ūn*

After them came the *Tābi'ūn* whom Allāh selected to establish His Religion, and He granted them the special honor of preserving the *Aḥkām* of the Religion and the *Sunan* of His Messenger ﷺ. They learned and memorized from the Companions of Allāh's Messenger ﷺ all the teachings and *Sunan* that they spread. They learned all of that with great care, precision, and understanding. They truly attained the status that Allāh assigned for them when He (عز وجل) said:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ﴾

*"And those who follow them (the Companions) in righteousness, Allāh is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him." [At-Tawbah (9):100]*

So it was by Allāh's Pleasure with them that they attained the high status that He granted them. No one can find fault with them because they exercised great caution and awareness concerning the affairs of the religion, and because they were righteous men fearful of Allāh. Allāh put them forward to protect His Religion, so you will not find anyone amongst them except that he was a great Imām, possessing great virtue and knowledge, holding fast to the *Sunnah* - may Allāh forgive all of them and shower them with His Mercy. The only exception to this is those who were not truly from them, but he attempted to enter himself amongst their midst, but he was not like them, not in understanding the religion, not in knowledge,

nor in memorization or precision.

### *Atbā' at-Tābi'ūn*

Then after them came the *Atbā' at-Tābi'ūn*, and they were the successors of the righteous, and the symbols of Allāh's Religion throughout the various lands. They were the scholars knowledgeable of the *Ḥalāl* and the *Ḥarām*, possessed of understanding and insight concerning Allāh's Commands.

Amongst them were Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah in Makkah, Sufyān ath-Thawrī, Shu'bah ibn al-Ḥajjāj, Ḥammād ibn Zayd in al-'Irāq, and al-Awzā'i in *ash-Shām*.

So it is that the scholars followed one after another drinking from a single, clear fountain: the Book and the *Sunnah*. It is a fountain in which they found no murkiness.

We are going to be discussing the biography of one of the great scholars who was amongst the highest ranks with respect to his knowledge, piety, and *Imāmah*. He was a trustworthy *Imām* of sharp intelligence and deep understanding. He was one of the most capable scholars in extracting meanings from the texts. He is Abū Muḥammad Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah al-Hilālī. He was proficient in discerning the authentic *ḥadīths* from the weak. He is famous for his status as a scholar, an ascetic, and a great worshipper.

Ibn al-Mubārak said, "The (best) students of az-Zuhri are three: Mālik, Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah, and Ma'mar."<sup>[1]</sup>

<sup>[1]</sup> *Al-Jarḥ wat-Ta'dīl* (1/16).

### **His Name and Lineage**

His name is Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah ibn Abī 'Imrān Maymūn, the *Mawlā*<sup>[1]</sup> of Muḥammad ibn Muzāḥim.<sup>[2]</sup> He was the *Hāfiẓ* of his age, *Shaykh al-Islām*, Abū Muḥammad al-Hilālī, al-Kūfī then al-Makkī.<sup>[3]</sup>

### **His Kunyah and Laqab**

His *kunyah* is: Abū Muḥammad

His *laqab* by which he was called is: ibn 'Uyaynah. He is also sometimes called Abū Muḥammad al-Hilālī.

Al-Hāfiẓ ibn Ḥajar said, "Al-Burhān al-Ḥalabī mentioned two biographies for Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah:

The first one: Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah ibn Abī 'Imrān.

The second one: Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah al-Hilālī, the *Mawlā* of Mis'ar ibn Kidām - from earlier - and he is worthless (i.e. a weak narrator). He used to commit *tadlīs*. Al-Burhān said, 'This is a different person from the first.'

I (ibn Ḥajar) say: It is not as he thought, for ibn 'Uyaynah was the *mawlā* of Banū Hilāl. Adh-Dhahabī mentioned in his *Fawā'id ar-Riḥlah* that when he met with ibn Daqīq al-'Īd, he asked him, 'Who is Abū

<sup>[1]</sup> Translator's note: Someone is considered to be a *mawlā* of a person or tribe if he was freed by them. Subsequently, his descendants are also attributed to that tribe as the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "The *mawlā* of a people is one of them."

<sup>[2]</sup> Muḥammad ibn Muzāḥim was the brother of Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk ibn Muzāḥim, the great Imām.

<sup>[3]</sup> *Siyar A'lām an-Nubalā'* (8/454).

Muḥammad al-Hilālī? He (adh-Dhahabī) answered, 'Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah.' As a result he was impressed with his strong recall. He was only attributed to Mis'ar because Mis'ar was from Banū Hilāl by blood."<sup>[1]</sup>

### Those Who Were Named Sufyān

A number of people were named Sufyān. One of the most famous and noblest of them is Sufyān ath-Thawrī, the *Amīr al-Mu'mineen* in *Ḥadīth*.<sup>[2]</sup>

Sufyān ath-Thawrī and Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah shared a number of teachers and students. They both narrated from al-A'mash and others, while al-Walīd ibn Muslim and others narrated from both of them.

Ar-Rāmahurmuzī said:

Al-Qāsim al-Muṭarriz came and related to us a *ḥadīth* from Abū Hammām or someone else: from al-Walīd: from Sufyān. Abū Ṭālib ibn Naṣr asked him, "Who is this Sufyān?" Al-Muṭarriz said, "This is ath-Thawrī." Abū Ṭālib said to him, "Rather, it is ibn 'Uyaynah." He said, "How do you know that?" He responded, "Because al-Walīd narrates a select number of known *ḥadīths* from ath-Thawrī, but he narrates abundantly from ibn 'Uyaynah. And Sufyān ath-Thawrī was earlier, and ibn 'Uyaynah narrated more."<sup>[3]</sup>

[1] Ibn Hajar, *Ṭabaqāt al-Mudallisīn*, p. 32.

[2] Translator's note: The author wrote a separate biography of this great Imām which is available from *Dar-us-Salam Publications*.

[3] Al-Muḥaddith al-Fāṣil, p. 286.

### His Birth and Upbringing

According to the strongest view, he was born in al-Kūfah in the year 107 H.<sup>[1]</sup>

Al-Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad al-Qabbānī relates: 'Abdur-Raḥmān ibn Bishr reported to us: I heard Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah on the night of Saturday, the middle of *Sha'bān*, in the year 196, "On this day, I am exactly eighty-nine years old, I was born in the middle of *Sha'bān* in the year 107." I say: he lived ninety-one years.<sup>[2]</sup>

He then moved to Makkah and grew up there. Ibn al-Jawzī said, "He was originally from Kūfah. His father was one of the deputies of Khālīd ibn 'Abdillāh al-Qasārī. So when Khālīd was removed as governor of 'Irāq and Yūsuf ibn 'Umar ath-Thaqafī took charge, he sought out the deputies of Khālīd, but they fled from him. 'Uyaynah came to Makkah and settled there."<sup>[3]</sup>

### His Father (رحمه الله)

He is 'Uyaynah ibn Abī 'Imrān, the *mawlā* of Banū Hilāl, al-Kūfī. He narrates from al-Ḥasan, and his son Sufyān narrates from him.

Yaḥyā ibn Ma'īn said, "The father of Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah was a money-changer at al-Kūfah. He fled from Yūsuf ibn 'Umar ath-Thaqafī,<sup>[4]</sup> and I have not

[1] *Tahdhīb at-Tahdhīb* (2/357), *Siyar A'lām an-Nubalā'* (8/454).

[2] *Siyar A'lām an-Nubalā'* (8/474).

[3] *Ṣifāt as-Safwān* (2/231).

[4] He became governor of Yemen, then the *Khalīfah*, Hishām, transferred him to the Governorship of 'Irāq, and he was a feared and relentless tyrant. According to what al-Madā'inī



heard of anyone narrating from him except for his son, Sufyān."

### The Waṣiyyah of His Father

Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah said: When I reached the age of fifteen years, my father called me and said, "O Sufyān, the days of childhood have passed you. Strive for righteousness, you will be one of its people. Do not be deluded by those who are deluded concerning Allāh and praise you with something while Allāh knows the opposite to be true of you. There is none who says anything good about someone when he is pleased, except that he speaks ill of that same person when he is angry, so choose solitude over bad company. Do not let my best thoughts concerning you become other than that, and no one will benefit from the scholars except he who obeys them." Sufyān said, "I took the waṣiyyah of my father as a qiblah, I turn wherever it may take me, and I never turn away from it."<sup>[1]</sup>

### His Mother (رحمها الله)

We do not know very much about her, except that the position that his father had with regards to knowledge and the religion indicates that she would have been a virtuous woman. It is said his maternal uncle was Ya'qūb ibn Abil-Mutta'id, and his cousin is Nu'aym

relates, his tablespread every day would consist of 500 tablecloths, the farthest of them away from him being no less in opulence than the one nearest to him. Then he was removed from the Governorship of 'Irāq when al-Walīd al-Fāsiq was killed, and his neck was struck off in the year 127 H. And all praise is due to Allāh.

<sup>[1]</sup> *Ṣifāh aṣ-Ṣafwāh* (2/231).

ibn Ya'qūb ibn Abil-Mutta'id. It is mentioned in the biography of Sa'id ibn Muḥammad ibn Sa'id al-Ḥazmī al-Kūfī, Abū 'Abdillāh, that "he narrated from Sharīk, 'Abdur-Raḥmān ibn 'Abdil-Malik ibn Abjur, Ḥātim ibn Ismā'il, 'Amr ibn Abil-Miqdām, 'Amr ibn 'Aṭiyyah al-'Awfī, Abū Yūsuf al-Qādī, and Ya'qūb ibn Abil-Mutta'id, the maternal uncle of Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah."<sup>[1]</sup>

At-Ṭabarānī said: Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Bawrānī, the Qādī of al-Ḥudaybiyyah from the lands of Rabī'ah, reported to us: Al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī aṣ-Ṣudā'ī reported to us: al-Ḥakam ibn al-Jārūd reported to us: ibn Abil-Mutta'id, the maternal uncle of ibn 'Uyaynah, reported to us: from his father: from 'Aṭā': from ibn 'Abbās: Allāh's Messenger ﷺ said:

«مَنْ أَنْظَرَ مُعْسِرًا إِلَى مَيْسَرَتِهِ أَنْظَرَهُ اللَّهُ بِذَنْبِهِ إِلَى تَوْبَتِهِ»

"Whoever grants respite (with regards to paying a debt) to a person in hardship until he is in a time of ease, Allāh grants him respite with regards to his sin until he repents."<sup>[2]</sup>

As for Abul-Mutta'id Nu'aym ibn Ya'qūb ibn al-Mutta'id, Abū Ḥātim said concerning him, "Munkar al-Ḥadīth, he narrated three or four munkar ḥadīths from Yaḥyā al-Bakkā' from ibn 'Umar." At-Tirmidhī and ibn Mājah report a single ḥadīth from him from ibn 'Umar saying, "A man belched..."<sup>[3]</sup>

<sup>[1]</sup> *Al-Wāfi bil-Wafiyat* (no. 2080).

<sup>[2]</sup> *Tafsīr ibn Kathīr* (1/441).

<sup>[3]</sup> *Tahdhīb at-Tahdhīb* (6/309).

## His Wife

Likewise, we know little about his wife, because the scholars do not occupy themselves with information concerning those around the scholars except if they were themselves known for seeking knowledge.

Muḥammad ibn an-Nu'mān has mentioned that he went to al-Baṣrah and resided there for some time, and he married the daughter of 'Abdullāh ibn Bakr as-Sahmī.<sup>[1]</sup>

'Abdullāh ibn Bakr ibn Ḥabīb as-Sahmī, Abū Wahb, was from the tribe of Bāhilah, and he was a trustworthy, truthful narrator; he died in Baghdād in the month of *al-Muḥarram* in the year 208 H.<sup>[2]</sup>

## His Sons

We do not know much about his sons either, except that he used to struggle with the financial burden of providing for his sons. One of the novel stories related concerning his sons is that he had a child who was still suckling who wished to seek knowledge, and we do not know to which stage he reached.

'Ubaydullāh ibn 'Umar al-Qawārīrī said, "I saw a suckling child of Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah who came to Fuḍayl so he said to him, "Is there not enough evil for you in your home, that you have come to this place, meaning: *ḥadīth*."<sup>[3]</sup> It is as if he marveled at the hastening of the young boy to seek the knowledge of

[1] *Ṭabaqāt al-Muḥaddithīn bi-Aṣḥān* (2/213).

[2] *Aṭ-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā* (7/295).

[3] *Iqtidā' al-'Ilm al-'Amal* (p. 82).

*ḥadīth*, because of the great hardship and difficulties that the students of *ḥadīth* used to encounter.

## His Brothers

The family of Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah were from those who occupy themselves with knowledge, and Imām Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah was their knight and their shining star.

Al-Hāfiẓ al-Mizzī states, "The sons of 'Uyaynah were ten brothers, all of them silk dealers. And five were also narrators of *ḥadīth*: Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah, Ibrāhīm ibn 'Uyaynah, Muḥammad ibn 'Uyaynah, Ādam ibn 'Uyaynah, and 'Imrān ibn 'Uyaynah. Sufyān took up residence in Makkah and he died there as well."<sup>[1]</sup>

Adh-Dhahabī states, "Sufyān had a number of brothers, amongst them: 'Imrān ibn 'Uyaynah, Ibrāhīm ibn 'Uyaynah, Ādam ibn 'Uyaynah, and Muḥammad ibn 'Uyaynah. All of these brothers narrated *ḥadīths*."<sup>[2]</sup>

The following account only mentions four, and perhaps it is because it is in relation to marriage. Yaḥyā ibn Yaḥyā stated:

I was with Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah when a man came to him. He said, "O Abū Muḥammad, I complain to you about so-and-so," meaning: his wife "I am the lowliest and most worthless of things in her eyes." Sufyān lowered his head for some time, then he looked up, and said, "Perhaps you desired (to marry) her in order

[1] *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl* (11/177).

[2] *Siyar A'lām an-Nubalā'* (8/465).

to increase in honor." He said, "Yes, O Abū Muḥammad." He said, "Whoever seeks after honor is tested with abasement, whoever seeks after wealth is tested with poverty, and whoever seeks after the religion, Allāh gathers honor and wealth for him along with religion." Then he began telling him a story; he said, "We were four brothers: Muḥammad, 'Imrān, Ibrāhīm, and myself. Muḥammad is the oldest of us, 'Imrān is the youngest, and I am between them. When Muḥammad wanted to get married, he sought after noble lineage. He married a woman greater than him in lineage, so Allāh tested him with abasement. 'Imrān desired wealth and married a woman wealthier than him, so Allāh tested him with poverty. They took whatever was in his hands, and gave him nothing, so he was bewildered about her affair. Ma'mar ibn Rāshid came to us, so I sought his advice. I related to him the story of my brothers, so he reminded me of the *ḥadīth* of Yaḥyā ibn Ja'dah, and the *ḥadīth* of 'Ā'ishah. As for the *ḥadīth* of Yaḥyā ibn Ja'dah: the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

«تُنْكَحُ الْمَرْأَةُ لِأَرْبَعٍ: لِمَالِهَا، وَلِحَسْبِهَا، وَجَمَالِهَا، وَلِدِينِهَا،  
فَاظْفَرْ بِذَاتِ الدِّينِ تَرُبَّتْ يَدَاكَ»

"A woman is married for four: her wealth, her lineage, her beauty, and her religion. So take the one with religion, may you be prosperous."<sup>[1]</sup>

And as for the *ḥadīth* of 'Ā'ishah:

«إِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النِّكَاحِ بَرَكَةٌ أَلَيْسَ مَوْثِقٌ»

<sup>[1]</sup> Al-Bukhārī (no. 5090) and Muslim (no. 1466).

Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said, "The marriage greatest in blessing is that lightest in burden."<sup>[1]</sup>

So I chose religion for myself, and lightening the load on my back, following the *Sunnah* of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ), so Allāh gathered together honor and wealth along with religion.<sup>[2]</sup>

### Those Whose Narrations Have Been Mentioned:

#### Ibrāhīm ibn 'Uyaynah:

He is Abū Ishāq, a righteous *muhaddith* and *imām*. He was born circa 120 H. He heard from Abū Ḥayyān at-Taymī, Ṭalḥah ibn Yaḥyā, Ṣāliḥ ibn Ḥassān, and Mis'ar. He is not a prolific narrator, and it is said that he died in the year 199 H.<sup>[3]</sup>

Adh-Dhahabī states, "He died a year before his brother, and his *ḥadīths* are *ṣāliḥ* (adequate)."

#### Muḥammad ibn 'Uyaynah:

He is the brother of Sufyān, the *mawlā* of Banū Hilāl. Al-Bukhārī said, "(He narrates) from Shu'bah. 'Alī (ibn al-Madīnī) said to me: from Yaḥyā ibn Sa'id: and Muḥammad ibn 'Uyaynah said, "We used to be high in status, we had camels which we would take out for them to drink water in a neighborhood near Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah," meaning: his brother."<sup>[4]</sup>

<sup>[1]</sup> Da'if. Reported by Aḥmad (6/82,145), ibn Abī Shaybah (no. 16384), and al-Bayhaqī (7/235). It was mentioned by al-Albānī in *da'if al-jāmi'* (no. 962).

<sup>[2]</sup> Abū Nu'aym, *al-Ḥilyah*, (7/289).

<sup>[3]</sup> *Siyar A'lām an-Nubalā'* (8/475).

<sup>[4]</sup> Al-Bukhārī, *At-Tārīkh al-Kabīr* (1/204).